

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MOSCOW 02466 191354Z

14

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INFO AMEMBASSY CAPETOWN

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 2466

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR

SUBJ: AFRICAN DIPLOMATS DISCUSS AFTERMATH OF ANGOLA CONFLICT

1. SUMMARY. MOST WORKING-LEVEL AFRICAN DIPLOMATS IN MOSCOW WITH WHOM WE HAVE TALKED RECENTLY HAVE TAKEN AN OPTIMISTIC VIEW OF THE ABILITY OF CENTRAL AFRICAN LEADERS TO AVOID FALLING UNDER INCREASED SOVIET INFLUENCE IN THE WAKE OF THE ANGOLAN CONFLICT. THE GENERAL VIEW WAS THAT THE CUBANS WOULD EVENTUALLY BE EDGED OUT OF ANGOLA, BUT THERE WERE MIXED OPINIONS CONCERNING HOW MUCH PERSUASION WOULD HAVE TO BE APPLIED TO ACHIEVE THIS END. U.S. POLICY IN ANGOLA WAS VIEWED WITH RELATIVE EQUANIMITY, BUT ONE  
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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 02466 191354Z

AFRICAN PREDICTED THE U.S. WOULD BE FACED WITH SIMILAR

DIFFICULT CHOICES WHEN THE INEVITABLE REVOLUTIONS  
BREAK OUT IN THE WHITE-CONTROLLED COUNTRIES FURTHER  
SOUTH. END SUMMARY.

2. IN THE COURSE OF SEVERAL RECENT CONVERSATIONS,  
WORKING-LEVEL AFRICAN DIPLOMATS IN MOSCOW HAVE, TO  
VARYING DEGREES, VIEWED THE APPARENTLY INEVITABLE  
VICTORY OF THE CUBAN AND SOVIET-BACKED MPLA WITH RELA-  
TIVE EQUANIMITY. OUR ZAIRIAN AND ZAMBIAN COLLEAGUES,  
NOT SURPRISINGLY, SEEMED MORE ALARMED AT THE RECENT  
TURN OF EVENTS, BUT BOTH EXPRESSED OPTIMISM THAT THEIR  
COUNTRIES COULD LIVE IN PEACE WITH NETO'S REGIME NEXT  
DOOR. ON THE IMMEDIATE HORIZON, THE ZAMBIAN EXPRESSED  
CONCERN THAT FLEEING UNITA SUPPORTERS WOULD CROSS  
INTO HIS COUNTRY AND EVENTUALLY PRESENT PROBLEMS OF  
INTERNAL SECURITY. HOWEVER, IN RESPONSE TO DIRECT  
QUESTIONS, NEITHER HE NOR THE ZAIRIAN FORESAW A DANGER  
THAT THE CUBAN TROOPS WOULD CROSS THEIR BORDERS IN  
"HOT PURSUIT", BUT EACH GAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THIS  
DISQUIETING THOUGHT HAD CERTAINLY CROSSED THEIR  
GOVERNMENTS' MINDS.

3. CONCERNING THE EVENTUAL DISPOSITION OF THE CUBAN  
TROOPS, THE ZAIRIAN TOOK THE APPROACH THAT A PROTRACTED  
GUERRILLA WAR BY SAVIMBI'S FOLLOWERS WOULD SIMPLY  
PROVIDE AN EXCUSE FOR THE CUBANS TO REMAIN IN ANGOLA  
AS PROTECTORS OF THE MPLA REGIME. THEREFORE, THE  
ZAIRIAN HOPED THAT, FOLLOWING AN MPLA MILITARY VICTORY,  
SOME SORT OF RECONCILIATION WOULD TAKE PLACE BETWEEN  
THE VARIOUS ELEMENTS WITHIN ANGOLA, AND THUS ACCELERATE  
THE EXODUS OF THE CUBANS. A TANZANIAN DIPLOMAT, ON  
THE OTHER HAND, TOOK THE TACK THAT THE CUBANS WOULD  
VOLUNTARILY LEAVE SOON AFTER THEIR VICTORY BECAUSE  
THEIR JOB WOULD BE DONE AND "THERE WOULD BE NO REASON  
FOR THEM TO STAY." A KENYAN COLLEAGUE CHOSE THE MIDDLE  
ROAD BY ADMITTING THAT THERE COULD POSSIBLY BE SOME  
DIFFICULTY ENCOUNTERED IN GETTING THE CUBANS TO GO  
HOME, BUT HE FELT CONFIDENT THAT NETO COULD MANAGED  
WITHOUT MUCH TROUBLE.

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PAGE 03 MOSCOW 02466 191354Z

4. IN DISCUSSING THE REASONS FOR MPLA'S SUCCESS,  
ALL THE AFRICAN DIPLOMATS AGREED THAT THE SOUTH AFRICAN  
INTERVENTION HAD BEEN THE DECISIVE EVENT THAT DEALT A  
DEATH BLOW TO THE ANTI-MPLA FORCES. THE GENERAL VIEW  
WAS THAT WITHOUT SOUTH AFRICAN "SUPPORT" UNITA WOULD  
HAVE HAD A TOUGH ROW TO HOE, BUT THAT WITH SUCH  
SUPPORT, THE TASK BECAME INSURMOUNTABLE.

5. AMERICAN POLICY RECEIVED FEW BRICKBATS DURING THESE PARTICULAR CONVERSATIONS. EVEN THE TANZANIAN LIMITED HIMSELF TO THE LINE THAT AMERICAN SUPPORT OF THE ANTI-MPLA GROUPS HAD HAD NO POLITICAL OR MORAL IMPACT IN THE COURSE OF THE STRUGGLE. THE REASON FOR THIS, HE ADDED, WAS THAT FOR SO MANY YEARS "WASHINGTON AND NATO" HAD BEEN SUPPLYING ARMS TO THE PORTUGUESE FOR USE AGAINST ALL THE REVOLUTIONARY GROUPS, INCLUDING THE ONES WE WERE NOW SUPPORTING. ACCORDING TO THE TANZANIAN, AMERICA'S "TARDY" ENTRY INTO THE FRAY WAS "LUDICROUS", AND HE PREDICTED THE SAME GENERAL SCENARIO WAS IN STORE FOR US WHEN SERIOUS REVOLUTIONS HIT THE WHITE-CONTROLLED COUNTRIES FARTHER SOUTH.

6. AS FOR THE SOVIET ROLE, THE GENERAL OPINION AMONG THESE OBSERVERS WAS THAT MOSCOW WOULD NOT HAVE A DOMINANT NOR PERHAPS EVEN SIGNIFICANT VOICE IN FUTURE ANGOLAN AFFAIRS. THE KENYAN AND TANZANIAN STRESSED THE ABILITY OF AFRICAN LEADERS TO AVOID SOVIET DOMINATION, AND EMPHASIZED THAT NO AFRICAN PEOPLE "WANT TO TRADE ONE OPPRESSOR FOR ANOTHER." ASKED WHETHER THE SOVIETS WOULD ALLOW THEMSELVES TO BE SO EASILY JILTED, THE GENERAL RESPONSE WAS TO CITE OTHER COUNTRIES WHICH HAD DONE SO WITH A GREAT DEAL OF SUCCESS--MOST OFTEN CITED IN THIS RESPECT WAS SAMORA MACHEL, BUT EVEN IDI AMIN RECEIVED APPROVING NODS.

7. THE ZAIRIAN AND ZAMBIAN EMPHASIZED ANGOLA'S FUTURE NEED FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND SAID THEY SAW LITTLE VALUE TO ANGOLA IN THE KINDS OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE THE SOVIETS ARE ABLE TO PROVIDE THERE. THE ZAMBIAN EMPHATICALLY ASSERTED THAT THE SOVIETS COULD NOT MANAGE THE

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 MOSCOW 02466 191354Z

CABINDA OIL FIELDS, AND THAT NETO AND HIS LIEUTENANTS WERE AWARE OF THIS. THEREFORE, HE ADDED, THE WEST WOULD OBVIOUSLY BE ASKED TO STEP IN, ALTHOUGH HE ADMITTED THAT LUANDA WOULD PROBABLY TAKE THE LION'S SHARE OF ALL FUTURE PROFITS.

8. COMMENT. WHILE THESE REMARKS CONTAIN NOTHING STARTLING OR SURPRISING, WE PASS THEM ON IN ORDER TO PROVIDE A GLIMPSE OF WHAT VARIOUS AFRICAN EMBASSIES HERE ARE PROBABLY REPORTING TO THEIR HOME OFFICES. THE IMPRESSION CONVEYED BY THESE AFRICAN COLLEAGUES IS THAT THEY HAVE DEFINITELY NOT BEEN INUNDATED BY SOVIET EFFORTS TO COGENCE THEM OF THE CORRECTNESS OF MOSCOW'S COURSE IN ANGOLA. ON THE CONTRARY, MOST SEEM TO HAVE HAD LITTLE, IF ANY, CONTACT WITH SOVIET OFFICIALDOM (THE

ZAMBIAN MENTIONED IT HAS BEEN MONTHS SINCE HIS  
AMBASSADOR HAD TALKED WITH ANYONE IN THE MFA). THE  
UNANIMITY OF THEIR CONFIDENCE THAT THE SOVIETS  
WOULD BE UNABLE TO CARVE OUT A PERMANENT POSITION IN  
SOUTH CENTRAL AFRICA WAS STRIKING, BUT IT IS DIFFICULT  
TO DETERMINE IF THIS VIEW WAS BASED ON OBJECTIVE  
ANALYSIS OR IF THE WISH WAS SIMPLY FATHER THE  
THOUGHT.  
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